

# THE REFORMER.

Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth.—*Jeremiah*, v. 1.

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## *American Society for Ameliorating the condition of the Jews.*

This Society it appears has now nearly finished its inglorious course. Mr. Frey is no longer Agent for the Society—and in his address to the Board of Directors, are the following remarks and statements:

“I entertained no doubt that as long as I could be useful to the Board, they would neither dismiss me, nor refuse to furnish a support for my family. But it is not to be concealed that a change, a very great change, has taken place in relation to this Society, in the minds not only of the public, but of the Board itself. The feasibility of our plans, and the wisdom of our measures, are on all hands called in question; and many men of honest hearts hesitate to yield to us their aid and approbation. I fear and tremble at the thought, that the noble and glorious object of our institution is defeated. I tremble on my own account, on your account, and for the cause of Christian charity and benevolence. I may be mistaken. But the public seem to me to have withdrawn their confidence; the auxiliary societies are expiring, and the income is very perceptibly diminishing from month to month, and should I travel as your agent for four months during the ensuing season, I should go without the least prospect of being able either to enrich your treasury, or add to your auxiliaries. It does not become me at this time to inquire into the causes which have produced this mortifying and unhappy state of things; they are wrapped in a mystery,” &c.

So matters stand at present with this famous and once popular society. The next inquiry is what is to be done with

the money that has been collected by Mr. Frey and three or four hundred auxiliary societies.

During a late meeting of this American Jews Society, held in New York, it is stated in the United States Gazette, that the debate on some questions “became so animated, that a reverend member, Mr. Reed, of Charleston, felt called upon to propose a prayer, that all angry and acrimonious feelings might be allayed.”

The whole of the numerous societies now in operation in this country, under pretence of converting the heathen, spreading the gospel, educating young men for the ministry, &c. &c. rest on the same foundation, and are influenced by the same principles as this “society for ameliorating the condition of the Jews,” and they will no doubt in the end experience the same fate. The public will not only see their inexpediency but their injurious and pernicious tendency to the cause of true religion, and wholly withdraw their support from them. Taken collectively, they constitute one of those numerous transformations of apparent righteousness which the Prince of Darkness assumes in order to beguile and lead astray the children of men. The many ingenious arts and stratagems employed by these societies to draw money from the people, prove that they have no real connexion or affinity with the true religion of Jesus Christ.

*For the Reformer.*

[Communicated from the state of N. York.]

Missionaries in India inform us that their labours are attended with much greater success at a considerable distance from the English settlements,

than near them, and that the bad examples of the professors of religion, deter the natives from embracing christianity, not being able to comprehend how it is possible for the actions of men to be in such complete opposition to their professions.—A similar opinion was entertained by the South American Indians from the conduct of the bigotted and avaricious Spaniards on their first appearance in the New World, and such was their aversion to the religion of their more than savage conquerors, judging from the daily walk of its votaries, that one of the chiefs, when about to be burnt at the stake, refused an interest in paradise, when offered him by an officious monk, on being informed that the Spaniards were *entitled* to habitations in that place of blessedness beyond the grave.

We need not, however, travel so far from home to produce instances of a similar nature,—let us look for a moment into the small county of Cayuga, New York. The Bible society of that county, in a late report, declare, that *more than two thousand families* are destitute of the *sacred writings*,—this too in the neighbourhood of the theological seminary at Auburn, where the *poor* and *pious* are supplied with Bibles, and receive an education gratis, provided they will swear allegiance to the hierarchy, and tamely submit in matters of conscience to the mild authority of one of the late professors, under whose paternal care the *orthodox* churches in the region of *moral darkness* are said to flourish. The truth is, that hot-headed and crack-minded men overshoot the mark.—In their zealous struggles for empire and dominion in the moral world, they destroy their citadel in attempting to enlarge their outposts, and frequently find an enemy in the heart of their camp, and their nakedness is discovered before they are aware of the craft's being in danger.

Mahomet, the eastern impostor, many centuries since, promulgated the doctrines of the Koran with fire and

sword,—but the inhabitants of this country have become so independent in their way of thinking, that they will never swallow dogmas through compulsion; and a species of religious intolerance attempted to be set up by a few who profess to have all the talents, education and piety at their disposal, will not comport with the genius of the 19th century. From these facts, I am insensibly led to reflect on the situation and conduct of the christian communities in our own country generally,—and in the first place, I would ask what must be the opinion of all those who have never “tasted that the Lord is good,” when they review the lives and actions of too many of those who *profess* to be the followers of the “meek and lowly Jesus.” Is it possible for such to entertain a favourable opinion of men (or their religious creeds) who live in a state of direct opposition to what they pretend to profess and believe? Who, while they teach humility and self abasement, exhibit in all their actions, pride and haughtiness of soul, and plainly demonstrate that they are slaves to, and under the dominion of, the most sordid and vile passions? Who, while they teach toleration and good will to *all* men, show conclusively by their conduct that they would willingly doom to destruction all those who may have the misfortune to differ with themselves in any *moot* point either in doctrine or discipline, and while they would strongly inculcate the necessity of full communion with that heaven born virtue, charity, would restrain its operations to their own church or sect exclusively.

But the will does not stop here—the “brother's hand is raised to shed his brother's blood”—churches are divided against themselves—the fell demon of discord has raised his standard in the camp of the Israelites, and many are they who hail with joy the well known signal. Sessions, presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies have ample scope, and a field is open for the dis-



play of forensic discussion and judicial decision. The Pope in his pontificals would not assume more consequence in the chair of St. Peter, than one of the presiding officers in these purely *spiritual* tribunals, where individuals of the same communion pursue each other with as much acrimony as a good Catholic formerly hunted a heretic (hugonot) in France, and with all the art, management and pettifogging talent that so often perverts justice in law courts of inferior jurisdiction. But notwithstanding all the rancour, hardness and malice evinced by the pious litigants, it is not uncommon to observe them partaking of the same communion, at the same time, when, instead of peace and love, the avowed emblems of this most holy institution, malice and guile are too often exhibited under the mask of sanctity, made manifest and apparent through the deceitful medium of a long face.

Should any have doubts as to the truth of the above statements, and possess judgment and candour sufficient to examine for themselves, they will soon learn, provided they will take the trouble to investigate the subject, that there is no fiction in the faint outlines attempted to be given in this cursory view of the subject. I close this article by repeating the old maxim, "by their fruits ye shall know them," and that grapes are not expected from thorns or "figs from thistles." Let all those who are seriously inclined examine for themselves. Let the scriptures of truth be their guide, unsophisticated by the traditions of men—Let them search, reflect, and decide. AMICUS.

*For the Reformer.*

While primitive Christians, amidst persecutions, contempt and sufferings, were engaged in preaching and propagating the religion of Jesus, it was not respected by men of dignity and wealth. It was too much opposed in its spirit and injunctions to the carnal appetite, and it therefore became ne-

cessary to new model it to suit all the purposes of power, wealth and fashion. As soon as worldly sanctions and motives began to mix their influence with it, it was contaminated, and therefore ceased to be the religion of Jesus Christ. It can, in fact, have no connexion with earthly principalities and powers, nor derive any aid and support from them. By this criterion we always have an unerring test of the character of true or false religion.

The pride and avarice of the clergy prepared the way for the connexion of Church and State, which was begun in the days of Constantine, and consummated under the Christian Roman Emperors. When the empire was broken into ten kingdoms, the clergy maintained their power and dominion among them all, even to the degradation of secular authorities. The professors of christianity had now lost sight of the precepts and the example of its head and founder, and by their apostacy and wickedness converted the religion of the gospel into a source of state policy, pride and avarice.

The Emperor Constantine, who was hailed by the clergy and officers of the Church as the great friend and protector of the Christian religion, must in turn reward those officers of the Church with honours, power and riches. This corrupt foundation laid to promote the cause of religion, which addresses itself to the pride and avarice of man, has been cemented and strengthened by every succeeding age since. Titles of the most exalted kind, down to Reverend and D. D. with princely emoluments, salaries and benefactions, have all emanated from this source.

In the United States, this same spirit is daily becoming more manifest. In the election of a chief magistrate or other officer, it is with many an indispensable condition, that he profess religion, or favour some distinguished sect. We are left to our own conclusions in seeing the chief magistrates of

states and other principal men combining their talents and influence to aid the cause of theological and other societies. Magistrates and candidates for office, must soon not only be required to believe and profess the dogmas of some sect, but to do it in a way that will tend to the elevation of such men as must rule and govern us. Those pronounced infidels and hereticks must not be admitted to a participation in our temporal and political concerns, and any found in such stations must be expelled from them. Services and privileges will be interchangeable and inseparable; they will act and re-act, and the end will be to corrupt the fountains of public justice, and perhaps destroy the best features of the constitution.

Clerical influence is so secret, insinuating, and invisible in its operation on the credulity and ignorance of our fellow beings, that they unsuspectingly become the victims of it. Every avenue to the passions is sought—Hope and fear are alternately wrought on to produce contributions. The blessings of immortality, or the most alarming apprehensions of future punishment are presented to induce the public to give liberally. This mercenary and ambitious order of men would fain make us believe that they are the true representatives of the Church, and specially favoured with a divine commission to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. They are in fact filling the kingdom of the beast all this time with darkness, while they flatter the pride instead of crossing the passions and appetites of mankind.

Notwithstanding the successful opposition made by the reformation to the kingdom of the beast, the spirit and principle of that kingdom have continued and triumphed ever since, in every nation and country professing christianity, where temporal and spiritual power are connected with each other. Names and countries do not alter or destroy the spirit of that pow-

er, which is restrained by law from taking life and liberty, while delusion and hypocrisy can operate unpunished and unseen. Thanks to the reign of the laws and to the progress of light and knowledge, which help to dissipate the mists of ignorance and mitigate the evils which the clergy would gladly inflict on all who reject their authority. Instead of external force, coercion of another kind is resorted to, to attain their purposes. By art and ingenious management, all classes of society are made to believe their present and future prospects depend in giving their interest and support to this order of men. On one hand, the flourishing state of the Church is held out for their encouragement to add further contributions to increase its splendour and dignity, and to enlarge its dominion, that they may partake of the present blessings and advantages which their liberality and zeal will secure to them. On the other, they are threatened with the loss of all these blessings, and of incurring the vengeance of heaven if they withhold their aid and benefactions. Thus they are made to see that external peace and plenty on earth, and endless felicity hereafter, will be the reward of honouring and serving a mercenary priesthood.

The clergy are always the sycophants and flatterers of men of power and wealth, and the latter make a return to them in conferring advantages and privileges, which their station enables them to bestow. The lower orders seeing and admiring the piety and zeal of those above them, are ever ready to imitate them.

A connexion is now regularly and systematically forming in this country between the clergy and our civil officers, magistrates, and military men. He who does not perceive such an approaching compact between religious, civil and military power, must be wilfully blind to the slow and gradual encroachments of clerical power in every



country which has been made the victim of it.

The pulse of the nation will be carefully watched, and as soon as the present preparatory course has effected its design, appeals may be next made to government for a portion of the public land, for the purposes of religious instruction, and the creation of theological seminaries, in order to induct the nation into such particular tenets as ought to actuate it. By aid of civil, the clerical power will gain an ascendancy that will constantly seek an enlargement,—and places of public trust will be withheld from those who do not give in their *adhesion* to the established orthodox faith.

Such will be the temptation and influence which will be exerted to make converts to the right faith, and to join in the compact we have been speaking of. That will be reputed the orthodox religion which has secured to itself the greatest worldly advantages, and which can be best maintained by learning and eloquence, art and address. A *national creed*, like the collects in the Romish and British rituals, will want to be prepared and arranged to serve all the purposes of peace and war, abundance and want, sickness and distress, perils on land and water, whether engaged in sober business or in the effusion of human blood. The religion of the heart, however, depends on something else than a formal set of words prepared and prescribed by earthly potentates and mercenary priests, co-operating to beguile and delude their fellow men.

But in order to divert the mind from the fear and service of God, to man's devices, it is necessary to substitute forms and emblems of worship to delude the populace, so as to dispose them the more readily to confound religion with appearances, and to do homage to their ecclesiastical rulers, that they may submit to those exactions required to support their authority over them.

The great mass of mankind, general-

ly disposed to blind homage and superstition, are easily carried away by the seductions of men in a garb fitted to deceive them; nor have the clergy, in any country, failed to improve opportunities to take advantage of their weakness and credulity. No such juggling and imposture can be tolerated under the kingdom of Jesus Christ, which every where enjoins sincerity, self-denial, and abasement.

Every thing seems to be tending, more and more, in this country, to the formation of our institutions so as to produce uniformity of sentiment and opinion, both in Church and State, and to exalt the influence of the clerical body. Constantine, by his zeal and interest for the cause of religion, and the aggrandizement of the Church, prepared the way for the degradation and slavery of the ten kingdoms of the beast, or those nations of the continent which had contributed so much to the success of his cause. The grand councils which were so long engaged, after his time, in establishing the Roman Catholic religion over these countries, and in preparing those imposing and idolatrous forms belonging to it, were indebted to his power and authority for their final success. That which influences and affects an individual may a nation,—and that which was at first small and weak, may, in every succeeding generation, insensibly, by gaining constant accessions of strength, become so great and powerful, and get so interwoven with the civil and religious institutions of the country by time and habit, as to be beyond the reach of remedy, except by violence and bloodshed.

Approaches to clerical power and dominion are making in this country under the most specious guises,—let those beware then, who are on the side of the priesthood, lest in aiding their cause they check the progress of knowledge and liberty, and thereby entail slavery and wretchedness on our country.

A VIRGINIAN.

*For the Reformer.*

### RELIGIOUS INDEPENDENCE.

"To incantations dost thou trust  
And pompous rites in domes august?  
See mouldering stones and metals rust  
Belie the vaunt  
That man can bless one pile of dust  
By chime or chaunt."

One of the strongest pillars that support the priestly edifice of modern times, is the belief that we are dependent on the clergy as interpreters of scripture. The man of piety to whom God has given reason and discretion, considers himself unsafe without the aid of a Rev. Father, although he has before him the family Bible, written in plain English, and perhaps loaded with commentaries. As if his reason had not been given him to exercise, he hesitates to hazard an opinion even on the simplest passages for fear of stepping beyond the bounds of orthodoxy. He shapes his sentiments according to the sentiments of the favourite guardian of his conscience, quotes him as good authority in social circles, and regarding all who do not float peaceably on the current which springs from a clerical source as enemies to religion, he becomes insensibly changed from the open hearted yeoman to the narrow minded bigot. The change from liberality to bigotry is produced so insensibly as to escape the notice of the subject of its operation. The world only is capable of perceiving the effect. As in chemical operations we see the subject and the agent and the effect, but in what manner it has been produced is a mystery that escapes the observation of our senses. Haunted by fears which are common to human kind, the bigot allows them to get the mastery over his judgment. That there are powers above him, nature has given him the capacity to comprehend. He feels them in the chilling blast—he sees them in the lightning's flash—he hears them in the thunder's roar. That they are offended at his conduct he fears: that he cannot render them pro-

pitious by means of his own individual powers he also fears. In this state of mind he surrenders himself to the guidance of another whom his superstition has clothed with powers and sanctity superior to his own. His independence is utterly annihilated: his passions have surrendered it to the priest who officiates at the altar, and who first bewilders, and then secures his victim, by a continual succession of the most ridiculous and unmeaning ceremonies,—as if that Almighty Power who created worlds—who regulates the order of things—"who rides the whirlwind and directs the storm,"—as if he were subject to the passions of a child, and could be pacified by a bauble. Has he not demonstrated to man how little he delights in places sanctified by human superstition? Has he not employed the hand of Time in levelling to the dust the proudest monuments of human grandeur? Has he not built for himself "a temple not made with hands eternal in the heavens"? And yet will man endeavour to confine omnipresence to habitations of human structure, and dazzle omniscience by the splendour of hypocritical worship? Alas, the savage who breathes the free air of his own native hills, and worships the Great Spirit as nature dictates, is truly religious compared to the boasted piety of *civilized* life.

But I have digressed. I will return to the subject. Reason was given to man for the noblest of purposes—that of attaining a moral elevation on the scale of existence. But in order to effect this it must be the governing faculty of his soul—it must acknowledge no superior—it must be independent. When, however, his passions have produced a moral degradation he becomes a slave. His reason becomes so nearly worthless as only to perform for him what instinct performs for the brute: It only enables him to satisfy his temporal wants—to sow—to reap—to go through with a regular succession of domestic duties. But his mind,



like a vessel, is directed—and a priest sits at the helm. It is loaded to be sure, but with the produce of the well cultivated farm, and the Rev. gentleman knows well where to land its proceeds.

This general inaction of the reasoning powers is extremely detrimental to the liberty of mankind. It is a ladder on which many a "mounting Bolinbroke has ascended a throne." It occupies the same place in this country that the Car of Juggernaut occupies in India, trampling thousands in the dust. To an American the sight of a fellow citizen in a state of mental slavery, is any thing but pleasing. And to the prophet, the consequences which in the ordinary course of things are likely to ensue, are every thing but consoling. He sees that his country presents externally the fairest prospects—that its citizens enjoy equal rights—that they are protected by wholesome laws and instructed by noble institutions: but in the moral horizon he beholds a murky cloud, the nucleus of a gathering storm which threatens to sweep them from his view.

During the dark ages, this unfortunate tendency of human nature had so degraded man that the scriptures were hidden from his view in the recesses of the cloister. He was then persuaded by his ghostly father that the holy word was to the morals as an excess of honey to the stomach, producing nausea and sickness instead of refreshment and health. But the times have changed. To keep the Bible from the eyes of the vulgar became no longer possible. Therefore the opinion, that the intellect of man is too obtuse to comprehend the plain and simple truths of the scriptures without the assistance of men possessed of the self same intellect, was industriously circulated as a substitute. The mind may be considered as under the same religious government as before. The difference is similar to that experienced by the subject of an empire at the death of one sovereign

and accession of another. This new opinion now sways the sceptre of the old: and although the effect has been to split the christian world into a multiplicity of sects, yet they are nearly all governed by the clergy, whose power, yes, whose very existence, depends upon this erroneous belief. Suppose the belief to be true and what follows? It follows that plain and simple truths require explanation before they can be comprehended by the mind: but this is false. It comprehends nothing so easily as simple unadorned truth—unadorned I mean by the false ornaments of pedantry, since its very simplicity is an ornament. It may be objected that there are some passages in the Bible which are obscure. Granted. But all allow there is enough for every required duty that is easy to be understood.—Then why sacrifice our independence when it may be so easily retained? Why attach an imaginary sacredness to persons who do not possess it? Why retain an appendage which is not only of no benefit, but which is absolutely calculated to bring slavery upon ourselves? I am obliged to leave these questions unanswered.

JUVENIS.

P. S. Since writing the above I have been much edified by the remarks of "A Pilgrim," in the Reformer for April, in answer to the author of "Sunday Police." I would advise this leviathan reasoner to give the world a new system of ethics entirely on a new plan.—Congress would undoubtedly grant him a patent right. It seems to be fortunate for John Quincy that our Pilgrim is a theologian instead of a politician, or, I fear me, he would never have found a seat so well cushioned as the presidential chair. For fear the readers of the Reformer may not at first view have discovered the great beauties of this author, we will take the liberty of pointing out one or two of the most conspicuous. The first we shall notice is an extraordinary instance of sagacity—a sagacity exceeding even

that of the canine race, and quite equaling that of the long eared gentry. In the Reformer, page 55, he says: "The position that 'religion is a thing exclusively between a man and his Maker,' is not only erroneous, but subversive of all religion," &c. Most any one except the sagacious Pilgrim would take the meaning of the author to be, that after a man had obtained religion he should abstain from an officious interference with his neighbour's opinions; but not that he should forever after hold his peace. Again—same page—after the author of Sunday Police had stated his doctrine of obedience, in which any man of common sense would not suppose that he had the most distant idea of *civil* obedience, the Pilgrim, with his usual sagacity, goes on to ask—"Does the writer here mean to say that government is not of God?" And under this deep view of the matter, after a few preliminaries, he continues to say, "that if the observance of the Sabbath is essential to the good order of society, it is the duty of every magistrate to enforce it," &c. This again is beyond the reach of common perception. Common men generally suppose that although the magistrate has a *perfect* right to enforce the observance of every thing calculated to promote the welfare of society; yet when dame nature, in her abundant kindness, sees fit to grant the liberty of opinion, his *perfect* right becomes an *imperfect* one, and consequently, according to old fashioned logic, he has not the power to enforce it. But we of common sense must of course stand corrected.

[In a private note the writer of the foregoing says: "You may perhaps object to the *style* of the above P. S. to my communication; but actually I don't think 'Pilgrim' deserves to be answered in any other manner; for if I see right he has in some places *purposely* perverted the meaning of the author of Sunday Police."]

For the Reformer.

I observe in your numbers for this year the views of several persons re-

specting the Sabbath. Will you indulge me to express mine? In doing which, I ask no magistrate to enforce it on others, nor any other coercion but a conviction of mind after a candid perusal of the subject. If I differ in opinion from other men, it proves nothing more than that we all "see as through a glass darkly," while seeking after the light of truth. I feel, as I think every other man ought to feel, "it is a very small thing that I should be judged of men's judgment, but he that judgeth me is the Lord."

That a Sabbath was enjoined on the Israelites admits of no dispute; but I must differ in opinion from some men in supposing we are under obligations to observe requirements peculiar to a dispensation which has long since been done away. We have no account of a Sabbath in the time of Noah or Abraham—the Scriptures are silent with regard to it. Why any person should affirm that the Sabbath was existing at that time without the authority of God to support them, I know not. The apostle evidently understood the Jewish Sabbath by Moses, as peculiar to that dispensation; for he enumerates it with the new moons and other requirements under that dispensation, which he tells us were a shadow of things to come. He also expressly tells us we are not under the law but under grace; a name which he gives to the dispensation of Christ. I should like to know what man or society of men have received authority from God to cull the Mosaic dispensation and give life to a part of that which the apostle tells us was nailed to the cross. If this were true, a person would naturally conclude that either Christ was not able or was not disposed to reveal a complete dispensation to men, and left it to be supplied afterwards by a special mission, or at the liberty of some aspiring mortal to complete. It is sufficient for me to say I firmly believe Christ was both able and did completely finish his work. Christ has enrolled in his dispensation



nine of the commands in the Jewish decalogue, and added a new commandment, which it appears to me is as imperfectly obeyed, even by the professed followers of Christ, as either of the rest. But the fourth command in the Jewish decalogue Christ hath seen fit to omit.

I anticipate a query, that under the dispensation of Christ I esteem every day alike. In reply, I believe all time is holy, and ought to be so esteemed by men. The same transgression of the law of Christ is equally heinous whether committed on the fifth or the first day of the week. Christ has given no license of indulgence in six days out of seven. I readily admit that the apostles and early christians assembled for worship on the first day of the week, to commemorate their risen Lord, and rejoice in the confirmed evidence of a resurrection from the dead; and that Christ sanctioned their object in meeting on that day by his peculiar presence. I also admit the propriety of christians meeting on that day for public social worship, and to edify each other in the knowledge and love of Christ.—Such occasions, rightly improved, may be a benefit to individuals and to society at large; but at the same time I do not find that Christ has dedicated any particular day of the week for his followers to worship him, or made one day more holy than the rest.

To conclude—"One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." But let us not call in the civil power to enforce religious obedience. "Render to all their dues." Let us not take of the things which belong to Cæsar and give them to God. Christ is able to maintain his own cause. "God has done his part—do thine." BEBE.

[From the Buffalo (N.Y.) Gospel Advocate.]

For several years past the bands of Superstition have been giving way in

Massachusetts, and the dominion of the priests over the minds of the people, has proportionably lessened. By late Boston papers we learn with unfeigned pleasure, that a total revision of the Common School Law of that state, took place at the last session of "the General Court."

The law, as it heretofore existed, obliged every teacher of a common school to procure a certificate, of the clergyman of the town where he proposed to teach, prior to commencing his school; and without such certificate, no man was allowed to occupy the station of district school teacher. Such a law led to manifold evils, as every priest who chanced to be a bigot, would refuse a certificate unless the applicant was of his own faith and practice; and the result was, that whatever town was cursed with a narrow minded and bigotted priest, was sure to have a man *of the same character* to teach the children in all its public schools. The revised law takes this power from the class of men who are the last that should ever have been entrusted with it, and gives it to a school committee of the town, to consist of not less than five persons, to be chosen annually, in public town meeting. This will release the schools of that state from a heavy misfortune under which they have long laboured, placing them beyond the reach of the clergy, and thereby enabling them to be made increasedlly useful. It is a triumph almost equal to the one obtained in this state by the people, over one J. V. N. Yates, late tract distributor for the N. Y. "State Tract Society."

The time seems to have come when these *clogs to improvement* have no place left in the minds of the people.

For the Reformer.

[Communicated from Palmyra, N. Y.]

Messrs. Editors—I have copied the following article from the Western (Utica) Recorder. It will be recollected that during the session of the

legislature of this state in 1824, the most vigorous attempts were made to get a law passed to close the canals on Sundays.

*"A bad Example—*We regret extremely to see in a letter from Rev. E. G. Howe, just published in the Connecticut Observer, that, according to his own statement, the writer, on his way from Massachusetts to Illinois, as a missionary, "performed divine service *on board a boat*, up the Canal, in the forenoon of *Sabbath*," October 2d. When will our clergymen *all* learn that, *for example's sake*, at least, they must avoid *every appearance* of evil? If clergymen have a right to travel in this manner, for the special object of preaching, others may certainly be excused in travelling as hearers; and thus the practice becomes sanctioned at once; nor is it possible for sermons, or essays, or resolutions to do away the influence of such examples: actions must still speak louder than words.

#### REMARKS.

I am inclined to believe that if the Rev. Mr. Howe had been so fortunate as to have been a *Presbyterian* Missionary, the cunning editor of the Western Recorder could have readily found an excuse for him. But "Oh! man, how unfortunate thou wert!" I think, too, that deacon Hastings exposes his *clowen foot* a little: "*For example's sake*," says he, "our clergymen must avoid *every appearance* of evil." How much does this sound like the self-conceited Pharisee!

REFLECTOR.

*Extract of a letter from Baltimore (Md.) dated April 13, 1826.*

"The following advertisement appeared in the paper this morning:

*'Fancy Articles, to be sold for a charitable object.—*The managers of the Episcopal Sewing Society of Baltimore give notice to their friends and the public, that they have deposited at Mrs. — No. — Market street, Nankeen coats and mittens for children, *dolls*, [*not dollars*] worked caps, frocks, &c. Emery bags, purses, pincushions, &c. &c. for sale at reasonable prices, and the proceeds will be devoted to the education of pious young men for the gospel ministry.

"If one were to take the above literally (which we might be justified in

doing by their actions) we should have a society governed by a regular set of bishops, for if I understand the term Episcopical, it means to be governed by bishops. I would query whether they have descended in a regular line of succession from the apostles, in this manufacturing of dolls? (an article which they, in numerous instances, endeavour to dissuade children from buying.) If so, why do they not come out and give us chapter and verse in proof."

[As a further specimen of the spirit of the age, see the following advertisement in another paper of December last:]

*"Christmas and New-Year's Fair—*The first Sewing Society of Baltimore, auxiliary to the Education Society, propose to hold a *Fair* for the sale of a variety of Fancy Articles and Toys, suitable for Christmas and New-Year's presents, such as ornamental baskets, card racks, purses, emery bags, needle cases, watch papers, dolls, &c. &c. The Fair will be held in the Lecture Room of St. Peter's Church, German Lane, on Tuesday and Wednesday next, the 27th and 28th instant. The proceeds of the sale will be sacredly devoted to the education of indigent and pious young men for the work of the gospel ministry. The purchasers of articles at this Fair, may at once please their taste, gratify their friends or children, and aid the cause of Charity and Religion."

#### EXCLUSIVE PRIVILEGES.

The following, among other reasons, are given in a protest entered by the speaker of the legislative council of Lower Canada, against granting a bill for extending certain privileges to the Wesleyan Methodists.

*"Legislative Council, March 16, 1826.*

#### "DISSENTIENT—

*"Because—*The Christian religion being the law of the British empire and the church of England and Ireland, as well as the church of Scotland, constituent parts of the imperial government, it cannot be competent to the subordinate and dependent legislature of a province to affect the one or the other, directly or indirectly, by any of its



acts; yet the bill violates the principles of the former, and the tenets and discipline of the latter, by a legislation which sanctions the administration of the holy sacrament of baptism by the ministry of mere laymen.

*"Because—*It affects the interests of the clergy of the churches of England, Ireland, and Scotland, by taking from them, (without any indemnity whatever) the fees to which as priests of those establishments, and consequently public officers of the imperial government, they are now entitled, upon baptisms, marriages, and sepultures.

*"Because—*In the year 1823, a bill for the marriage of dissenters was introduced into the house of lords, in which all that was asked, was, that after having gone through the forms required by law, and having paid the fees due to the established churches, dissenters should be allowed to marry in their own chapels, and that their marriages should afterwards be regularly registered by the clergymen of the parish; yet even this bill was rejected upon the first reading.

*"Because—*The bill tends to encourage schism, and to foster dissensions in religion, by raising the most unlettered labourer if he is a preacher to any sect, to the power and to the rank of the regular priesthood.—A premium which cannot fail to determine the sects which now exist, to resist all ideas of union with the established churches, to encourage the foundation of new sects, with the same disposition, *ad infinitum*, to degrade the established churches and ultimately religion itself."

#### INCREASE OF CRIMES.

"Throughout the country," says the London Morning Chronicle of April 18th, "there is nothing but alarm, on account of the rapid increase of crime, and the inability to dispose of prisoners. In the Liverpool Mercury of Friday last, we find it stated that the Recorder, in addressing the Grand Jury, at the Easter Sessions, observed, 'That

he regretted to find that the number of prisoners to be tried at the present Sessions was unusually large.' At the Salford Sessions, Mr. Norris, in his charge to the Grand Jury, stated, that the number of commitments, in the short space of ten weeks and a few days, was 232. Complaint is made of the re-appearance of old offenders, who are never, it is said, fewer than one fourth of the whole. What is to be done with this evil? It is obvious that things cannot long be suffered to remain on their present footing. There is something radically wrong in our criminal system."

Another paper states, "Germany alone is said to be infested with sixteen thousand robbers, besides those in Spain and Italy," [where they are known to be very numerous.]

Whoever is in the habit of looking over the columns of our own newspapers, and reads the numerous accounts of murders, robberies, and frauds contained in them, will need no other argument to convince him of the rapid increase of crimes in this country. All the meeting-houses, priests and missionaries among us, seem to have no tendency to arrest the progress of evil, or lessen the frequency of crimes. Nor does the erection of numerous penitentiaries throughout our country produce any better results. The state prison, now building near this city, exceeds in magnitude any structure of the kind perhaps in the world. The outer wall, which is upwards of fifty feet in height, and built of stone, encloses nearly nine acres of ground. The cost of the whole building will be but little short of half a million. As a new experiment to deter from crimes, every prisoner is to be kept by himself, and to be without work. How far this system will prove successful time must disclose.

London is said to contain 1,263,595 inhabitants, covering a space of more than 21 miles; with 8,000 streets, 160,000 houses, and 394 churches.

## EFFECTS OF KINDNESS.

[From the Religious Inquirer.]

"During the disputes that usually attend the election of an emperor of Germany, Soleure, having taken the part of Lewis of Bavaria, in the fourteenth century, was besieged by Leopold of Austria. Whilst the siege was carrying on, a great inundation of the Aar swept away the works, bridges, boats, and warlike machines of the besiegers, and brought into jeopardy many soldiers and artificers. In the midst of this disaster, the people of Soleure, forgetting that the sufferers were their besieging enemies, employed every method to save them from destruction, and actually rescued many from perishing. Struck by this singular act of humanity, Leopold desisted from his attacks, requested to be admitted as a friend, with thirty attendants, within the town, presented a banner to the town's people and ratified with them a treaty of peace and amity."—*Simond's Travels in Switzerland.*

Had the inhabitants of Soleure taken advantage of Leopold's distress, occasioned by the inundation, to overcome or exterminate their besiegers, the inhumanity of the attack would have been so plain, the cruelty so great, that each soldier of the invader would have parted with life in the most desperate struggle, and Soleure would have bled at every pore. But when the besieged rescued their drowning foes from death, and took means for their relief and safety, they overcame enmity with kindness, they converted foes into friends, and effected more by a few acts of philanthropy, than has been accomplished by a war spirit, or the implements of death, since the murder of Abel. Not all the power of the physical world could have induced Leopold to present a banner to the inhabitants of Soleure, and ratify with them a treaty of peace and amity; yet the benovelence of his foes tamed his warring spirit, and made him as zeal-

ous to promote their welfare, as he had been to effect their destruction.

"Ancient history informs that in the days of Romulus a war occurred between the Romans and the Sabines;—that during the war the Sabines by stratagem obtained possession of the Capitoline,—in consequence of which a general engagement ensued.—This was renewed for several days with almost equal success. The last engagement was fought in the valley between the Capitoline and Quirinal hill. After the battle had become general and the slaughter prodigious, the attention of the parties was attracted by a company of Sabine women who had been married to Romans. These females, with their hair loose and their ornaments neglected, rushed in between the combatants, regardless of their own danger, and with loud outcries implored their husbands and their children to desist. Upon this the combatants, as if by mutual impulse, let fall their weapons, and ceased from the work of mutual destruction. A treaty of peace and union was soon formed."—*Goldsmith's Roman History.*

Had these Sabine women conducted like the Spartan ladies and the female savages, and rushed into the battle to inspire their husbands and sons with fiercer rage and more determination to conquer or die, the consequences would have been awful, and peace would not have been restored to the city, till it had become silent as the chambers of the grave. But how much more efficient were the entreaties of a few wives and mothers in producing friendship and a treaty of peace and union, than all the instruments of destruction which had been tried for days without the least prospect of success, but with increasing desolation and fury.

## MORE PERSECUTION IN EUROPE.

It is stated that "sixty families in Germany, having adopted a new religion, have been driven from their vil-



lage. Government have sent some ecclesiastics to re-convert them, who have been unsuccessful. Another is to be sent—if he fails, the fanatics are to be conducted to Wallachia by a military force."

"Doubtless," says the Boston Recorder, "these new religionists and fanatics are of the same character as have of late suffered violent persecutions at Geneva and other parts of Switzerland;—that is, persons of devoted and self-denying piety. If the intolerant Austrian government should drive them into Wallachia, the effect may be similar to that of the persecutions and dispersion at Jerusalem, soon after the ascension of our Lord."

#### PRIESTCRAFT.

It is stated in the Gospel Advocate that the people of a certain new and thinly populated town in Ashtabula country, Ohio, had agreed to settle a Presbyterian preacher at 100 dollars per annum, which was as much as they could afford to give. "All parties," says the account, "being perfectly satisfied, nothing remained but the ceremony of ordination. The clergy assembled *en masse*, but would not proceed because the salary was too small; it was necessary the young man should be well provided for, that he might live in affluence as well as indolence, and if he were not capable of making a bargain, it was the duty of the Presbytery to see to it; it would be a bad precedent, and they would not ordain the man unless his salary was raised to 400 dollars. Both the priest and the people urged that it was a matter entirely between themselves, and they were satisfied. The clergy finally proposed to accept of 300 dollars, but as that was not complied with, nothing was done."

[From the Western Balance.]

#### MODERN PILGRIMS.

In the summer of 1818, a company of people, calling themselves *Pilgrims*,

appeared descending the Mississippi, in a flat boat. By their own account they started from Lower Canada, in a company consisting of eight or ten. In Vermont they recruited twenty or thirty; in the State of New York, several more—and when they reached Cincinnati, their numbers amounted to about sixty.

Their leader, a Canadian, by the name of Bullard, (called also by his followers, the prophet Elijah) was of a diminutive stature, with a club foot.—Before he began his mission, he had a severe spell of sickness, when he fasted forty days (so he said, and his disciples believed;) after which he recovered very suddenly, by the special interposition of the Divine Spirit, and being filled with enthusiasm, he declared that he was commanded to plant the church of the Redeemer in the wilderness, and among the heathen. From these notions, thus imbibed, and which he instilled into his followers, they believed themselves capable of fasting forty days; accordingly when they committed themselves to the current, the prophet enjoined a forty days' fast. The people becoming sick and in great distress from hunger, this severe commander found it necessary to remit, in some degree the rigor of his injunction, and he permitted the taking of flour broth through a quill, because he received his food in this way after his long sickness and fast, when he could not open his jaws; and which had the vivifying effect, taken by him for supernatural power or inspiration. But as the gruel allowed was very meagre, being simply flour and cold water, debility, misery and death, attended the experiment. Yet with faith and hope they persisted.

In this wretched situation, they arrived at Pilgrim's Island, which derives its name from this fact; at which place they were fallen in with by a barge belonging to Nashville, whose crew, detesting the conduct of the prophet and his seconds, who watched and governed the timorous multitude, gave

two or three of the leaders a sound drubbing with the pliant cotton-wood switch.

They next landed at the Little Prairie—The prophet's staff, which by the direction of its *fall* had hitherto pointed out the way, now stood still; and he declared that here he was commanded to settle and build a church.—But Mr. Walker who owned the soil, and resided in this solitary spot forbid the undertaking. This was accounted persecution, yet they continued seven days, during which several died; among whom were children which were placed on the beach by their parents, at the command of Elijah, when exposed to the scorching sun, they wallowed holes in the sand, while they struggled away the agonies of death.—While here labouring under sickness and persecution, it seems they began to suspect that they were forsaken by the Divine Spirit, and that no more miracles could be wrought for them. Hence they commenced the cry of "Oh my God why hast thou forsaken me!" When by assisting each other the vociferating cry was not intermitted for three days and nights.

They stopped further down at a desert place where six or eight more died, whose bones still lie on the shore uncovered. And all who remained, when they arrived at Helana, were objects of horror and compassion. The hospitable inhabitants furnished them a plentiful supply of milk and more nourishing gruel, for taking which every one was provided with a piece of reed cane.

Their boat next struck upon a sand bar near the mouth of the Arkansas. The prophet, his brother, and other leaders being dead, the remnant dispersed into the settlements, and down the river in passing boats.

From the time the party entered the Mississippi, their members decreased daily by death or desertion—And when they made their final landing, only about fifteen remained. One disciple eloped at the Little Prairie, with all the

cash belonging to the company. One child was rescued here and raised. Several individuals who were dispersed in various directions, are now comfortably settled, but it is supposed that more than half their number died on the pilgrimage.

This fete of folly and delusion, is perhaps worthy of notice, as furnishing a striking instance of the blindness of credulity—the wildness of fanaticism, and the miserable propensity of the mind, to believe itself possessed of powers which do not belong to humanity.

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*For the Reformer.*

[Communicated from Perry County, Pa.]

*Mr. Editor*—I have received several numbers of your valuable work, which gives an account of the numerous arts, schemes, and impositions, practised by pretended preachers of the gospel, and beg leave through the same medium, to exhibit from time to time such circumstances as fall under my own notice. I was brought up a Presbyterian, but am not disposed to shield from merited reprehension those of any sect or society, when the good of society requires the truth to be told. You need not fear the authenticity of what is contained in any of my communications, as I shall state nothing but facts.

The first circumstance which I shall here relate, took place in Carlisle, a place much noted for revivals of religion some time back. The congregation in that village being vacant, an effort was made to raise a salary for a Pastor. Not less than fifteen hundred dollars could support him. Subscriptions were sent round in all quarters, new members were added to the church, and things went on finely until collection time came round. The language of the Priest was—Paid I must be—I cannot expound the gospel without a support—and he quoted all the passages of scripture calculated to suit his purpose, in proving that he ought to be paid. In the next place those that



would not pay must be sued, and accordingly recourse was had to law to compel payment. One poor man, in particular, by the name of H — was prosecuted for a small pittance of stipends, his small children deprived of their little necessities, and himself turned out of the church, all to pamper and aggrandize a high-minded clergyman, whose private fortune is said to be forty thousand dollars, and who is continually saying, Give, give,—and using every means to draw money from the pockets of his poor deluded congregation, while he himself withholds his hand from the needy and the necessitous; and, like the Priest and Levite, leaves it for others to assist those in distress.

One more circumstance I will here relate. A Congregation in Sherman's Valley, became vacant in consequence of the death of Rev. Mr. Line. The church being weak, was not able to raise a high salary. A new subscription therefore was set on foot to obtain more money, and we were to have one fourth of the preaching in Landisburgh for one year. Great pains were taken to get subscribers; money, money, we must have, was the cry, or we shall be left without a preacher—Mr. Olmstead can't preach without more pay. Subscribe something for one year to give him a start. Some subscribed liberally, as it was represented the preacher was a young man from York State, and was poor, and was indebted for some of his tuition. Give him something for one year, it was said, and after that his salary will be sufficient for his support.

Little did we think there was a false representation made with regard to the subscription paper. A collector was appointed to call on us for the money, on paying which, as is common, we requested a receipt in full of our subscription. Oh, says he, I cannot give such a receipt. Why not? he was asked. Because, says he, you have only paid for one year. Very well, we answered, we only subscribed for one year. Oh, said he, a preacher cannot live that way. Look at this—read this

paper. *Behold our astonishment* on finding we were bound to pay to him, the said James M. Olmstead, the sum annexed to our names forever,\* although not belonging to the same church. If this is not deception and fraud, cloaked with religion, I know not what term to give it. Besides, the man is a very poor preacher, and makes as poor a prayer, and is one of those selfish, illiberal creatures, who never forgets to pray for all churches connected with his own, and that too in such a way that we may draw the conclusion he wishes all others to fall. EXPOSITOR.

#### ON THE PRESENT AGE.

That we live in an eventful period, and are on the verge of great changes, both in the political and religious world, the testimony of prophecy and the circumstances daily unfolding themselves, plainly show. Throughout the whole of Europe, materials are forming and combining together to produce the most sanguinary conflicts that have ever yet been witnessed on the earth. Two spirits are at work, each seeking to strengthen itself and to overcome its opposite. These contending spirits, are, *a spirit to have the rule*, and *a spirit to be free*. They are in their very nature irreconcilable with each other, and they will never cease to agitate and work in the minds of the population, till one of them is completely brought down and subdued. The final struggle, between these adverse and conflicting principles, will terminate the existence of millions whose iniquities are full, and whose crimes and wickedness call to heaven for vengeance. This period of time is described in Revelation, under the symbol of *treading the wine-press of the wrath of God*, when *blood comes out of the wine-press*, even unto the *horse-bridles*, by the space of a *thousand and six hundred furlongs*.

Not less remarkable or great will be the conflict and changes that will take place in the religious world, and among those who profess the christian name. Nearly all that now passes for religion will be destroyed or rooted up, as *plants which the heavenly Father has never planted*, and this work will not be accomplished without the greatest opposition and commotion in every part of christendom. The advocates of sectarianism and degeneracy,

\* We have heard of a number of cases similar to the one above noticed, which should serve to put people on their guard.

prompted by interest and attachment to their respective sects, like legitimate tyrants and kings in the political world, will exercise all their zeal, and bring forward all their strength to oppose and put down the principles of truth and those who witness against their corrupt conduct and antichristian proceedings. But all their opposition will prove like the opposition which was made to the gospel when it was first promulgated in its purity. It will only accelerate their own downfall, and hasten the glorious period when the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess it for ever. See Dan. vii, 18, 27. No changes, particularly such as rectify abuses and remove wickedness, have ever been effected without a violent struggle; and until that great change, here spoken of, takes place, mankind will only continue to get worse and wander further from the right path.

A late paper states, that "in Spain there is one clergyman to 58 inhabitants; in Naples, one to 50; in Sicily one to 23; and in Portugal one to 15." In all these countries the people are corrupt in proportion to the number of their priests.

#### *Episcopal Theological Seminary.*

The amount subscribed to the Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church, located at New York, is 77,718 dollars. "Agents," says the Church Register, "are still employed in soliciting further subscriptions."

If the Episcopalians were as anxious to become truly religious, as they are to get money for their Theological Seminary, it would be better for themselves and the cause of Christianity.

At Hartford, (Con.) on the 28th March, James Hunter was tried before the County Court, convicted, and fined 60 dollars for the crime of "uncommon dexterity and agility of body," in riding a horse without saddle or bridle, in the circus lately erected at that place, and leaping through a hoop, walking a slack wire, turning a somerset from a horse, still vaulting, and dancing a hornpipe dexterously to music.

[*National Gazette.*]

A Caucus is recommended, in the Connecticut Observer, to be holden alternately at Hartford and New Haven, on election week, to be composed of clergymen throughout the state. "For what purpose?" asks an editor.

#### *Eagle Bank, New Haven.*

It is stated in the Connecticut Journal, that when the Eagle bank failed, there was due from that Bank to the Savings Bank, 90,000 dollars, and to Ecclesiastical Societies, &c. 123,800 dollars.

#### *Extract of a letter from New-Harmony.*

"The Library is a most costly one, selected with great taste and judgment by Mr. McClure while in France. This collection of books, maps, philosophical and musical instruments, cost 100,000 francs, and is contained in packages weighing upwards of fifty tons. Besides these, Mr. Owen has purchased 1500 dollars worth of books, and the whole of these valuable articles have been brought from New Orleans, and are now at Shawneetown, on their way to New-Harmony.—New-Harmony will have the best Library, and the best school, in the U. States."

[*United States Gazette.*]

Mr. Owen's establishment at New Harmony has received a Library and philosophical apparatus worth 20,000 dollars. The New Harmony Gazette of the 22d ult. says: "The town now presents a scene of active and steady industry; each is busily engaged in the occupation he has chosen for his employment." [*E. Post.*]

#### EXTRACT.

*Religion* is not confined to any particular times or places, but is of constant obligation, and should show itself on all occasions; not indeed in the sanctimonious visage, or in the cant of bigotry, but in the temper and spirit with which all the duties of life are performed. It should add new lustre to all the kind and amiable feelings of our nature, and repress all those evil passions which extensive intercourse with mankind, amid conflicting interests, is apt to call forth. It should show itself in meekness under insult, patience under injuries—should repress the hasty word and the look of anger. It should bring down the lofty look, and check the miserable aspirations of vanity.

At the eighth annual meeting of the Presbyterian Education Society, lately held in New York, we find Gov. Clinton again in the chair.

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